
Commerce & Labor Committee

HB 1878

Brief Description: Creating the registered interior designer professionals act of 2005.

Sponsors: Representatives Conway, Wood, Jarrett, Kessler and Linville.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a system of registration for interior designers, and sets criteria for becoming registered.
- Allows only those who are registered to use the title "registered interior designer"; however, others may practice interior design.

Hearing Date: 2/16/05

Staff: Rebekah Ward (786-7106).

Background:

Interior design is not regulated in Washington. Anyone may do interior design work and anyone may use the title interior designer.

As they are not required to register, the number of individuals who do interior design as a profession is not known for certain. The Department of Licensing (Department) estimates there are approximately 1500 interior designers practicing in Washington.

Depending on the type of design services provided and the size of the project that requires a building permit, some local building officials require plans prepared by an interior designer be approved by an architect or engineer before being submitted to a state or local building department for the purpose of securing a building permit.

The National Council for Interior Design Qualification (Council), a professional organization, certifies interior designers based on examination, experience, and education. Twenty-four jurisdictions including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico currently regulation licensure and certification of the interior design profession.

Summary of Bill:

A system of regulation for interior designers is established in the Department and qualifications for registering as an interior designer are established.

Qualifications. Beginning July 1, 2006, to register as a interior designer, an individual must meet the following requirements:

- be certified by the Council;
- have a total of six years of work experience and formal education in interior design, of which at least two years must be formal education in the field. The curriculum should encompass specified topics, such as manual and computer-aided design, two and three dimensional design, design and composition fundamentals, color theory, building systems, material, finishes and specifications, codes and ordinances, presentation skills, and business practices management; and
- pay the licensing fee established by the Department, which must cover the costs of establishing and maintaining the registration program.

Grandfathering. Until July 1, 2007, an individual who has worked for 15 years as an interior designer and completed at least two years of formal education in the field may also register as an interior designer.

Reciprocity. The Department may grant registration to an individual who is certified by the Council and registered or licensed by another state that has qualifications substantially equivalent to those of Washington.

Continuing Education. Registered interior designers must complete 10 hours of continuing education every two years.

Restriction on Use of Title. After July 1, 2007, only registered interior designers may use the title "registered interior designer" in Washington. However, other individuals may practice interior design and call themselves "interior designers", as long as they do not use the title "registered interior designer."

Penalties. Violations are misdemeanors and may in some circumstances be subject to civil penalties up to \$5,000. Cease and desist orders may also be issued by the Department for unlicensed practice.

These provisions do not affect the practice of architecture or engineering.

Rulemaking: The Department is given the authority to develop the necessary forms to use in the verifying that the registration requirements have been met.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 9, 2005.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.